

The Archaeology of a Vortex.

I'd been out, across the road, to a small market stall that was selling old books and small magazines. Little journals with a small print run, artefacts of the literary past, remnants of small philosophy groups and obscure art movements. I bought a few things.

I'd returned, clutching my treasure trove, to the single room I rented above the High Street. I set the bundle of books and magazines down on my bed and looked them over. A nice little collection.

I picked out from amongst them an old copy of Wyndham Lewis's "BLAST", a magazine of Vorticism from the First World War period. I was amazed at the condition it was in. Like new. After so many years. Oh, yes I should explain that these events occurred, if they occurred at all, in the 1980s. So, as you can well imagine, I had not expected a magazine from 1914 or 1915 to be in pristine condition. Nevertheless, here it was, legible and new looking, after 70 years.

I noticed that the numbering was impossible too. There had only ever been two editions of BLAST and the numbering of this one declared it to be a third. An unknown third BLAST in newish condition? No. It was obviously a fake.

Very authentic looking though. There was no definite date but the first and second editions of BLAST had been from 1914 and 1915 respectively so I browsed through number "three" looking for clues of its real age.

There was an article referring to Wyndham Lewis's book "The Childermass".

Childermass was published in the late 1920s so this magazine was later than that. Then I noticed that not only Childermass but all four volumes of the Childermass series were mentioned. "Well that puts the tin lid on it!" I muttered, "volumes two and three didn't come out until 1955 and the fourth volume was never completed".

I paced about the room wondering on what sort of fakery I had wasted my money.

Then I remembered that one of the books I'd bought at the same time was called "The Trial". That clicked together. The planned fourth volume, incomplete at the time of Wyndham Lewis's death, was to be called "The Trial of Man"!

I picked up the book and began searching its pages. Whatever this was I could see that it wasn't any publicly known work of Wyndham Lewis's. I sat down and began to read the book from the beginning. A strange, atemporal, story began to unfold.

Archaeologists in 1990 descend into a fissure in the earth which has opened up in Northern Canada following a great unexplained vortex.

The archaeological scientists find that the hole in the earth is structured like the vortex which created it, with nine areas formed as three sets of three. The "dig", if we may so term it, progresses through each of the nine areas, cataloguing unusual rock formations, increases in temperature, strange flora and fauna and some unusual local tribes with mutated physical features never seen in the surface world.

In the tenth area they meet a king who sits on a throne and bemoans his fate. He was once a king of evil, yet now the arrival of the vortex has introduced light into his subterranean world and caused him to be filled with the virtue of God. He cannot move for saintly thoughts and impulses and must acknowledge that the creator of this world has moved on to some even higher realm and that this lowly king of evil is now forced to fill the breach and become

the new God whose heart is naught but love and all of caring for his dependant universe, all of being the heart and the axis and the centre of the turning cosmos.....

I awoke.

I had been dreaming.

There was no such book. Nevertheless I still wondered in half sleepy thoughts: If it wasn't real then where did it come from and where did it go? From nowhere to anywhere by way of somewhere and everywhere. From the depths of the human brain on the motorway of the soul.

Why was it called "The Trial?" Well, strictly speaking, it wasn't called that because it didn't exist. Why did my subconscious mind think it was a trial? Who was on trial? Humanity or Satan? Carl Jung tells us that the archetypes are instincts when those instincts are processed by the imagination.

So which archetype was Satan? I mean which instinct was he? The instinct for trial and punishment? Perhaps the meaning of the dream was that judgement needed to be elevated to a higher plane than one which was only at the level of those being judged? Judgement from a moral high ground replacing judgement by our peers or by our inferiors? No. That seemed too obvious. The dream had been deep, deeper than simple explanations.

Numinous and awe inspiring yet also twisted and comedic.

I would ponder on the meaning of that dream for a long time to come.